

Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets



(11) **EP 0 997 384 B1**

(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION**

(45) Date of publication and mention
of the grant of the patent:
15.01.2003 Bulletin 2003/03

(51) Int Cl.⁷: **B65D 23/00**

(21) Application number: **99306760.2**

(22) Date of filing: **25.08.1999**

(54) **A retaining mechanism**

Haltevorrichtung

Mechanisme de retenue

(84) Designated Contracting States:
**AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE**

(30) Priority: **28.10.1998 GB 9823650**

(43) Date of publication of application:
03.05.2000 Bulletin 2000/18

(73) Proprietor: **Kado Industrial Company Limited**
Shatin, New Territories (CN)

(72) Inventor: **Chan, Chik Sum**
Yuen Long, New Territories (HK)

(74) Representative: **Findlay, Alice Rosemary**
Lloyd Wise
Commonwealth House,
1-19 New Oxford Street
London WC1A 1LW (GB)

(56) References cited:
US-A- 2 731 273 US-A- 3 926 532
US-A- 4 392 759 US-A- 4 509 654
US-A- 4 915 239 US-A- 5 148 948
US-A- 5 240 147

• **PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 1997, no.**
2, 28 February 1997 (1997-02-28) & JP 08 268409
A (MOON STAR CO), 15 October 1996
(1996-10-15)

Note: Within nine months from the publication of the mention of the grant of the European patent, any person may give notice to the European Patent Office of opposition to the European patent granted. Notice of opposition shall be filed in a written reasoned statement. It shall not be deemed to have been filed until the opposition fee has been paid. (Art. 99(1) European Patent Convention).

Description**Background of the Invention**

[0001] This invention relates to a retaining mechanism and, in particular, such a mechanism suitable for, but not limited to, retaining an article (e.g. a liquid dispenser) with a base member.

[0002] Various retaining mechanisms have been devised for releasably engaging an article to a base, e.g. for the releasable engagement of a liquid dispenser with a base member. For the purpose of discouraging unauthorized removal of the liquid dispenser from the place of use, the dispenser is usually provided with a protrusion with a spherical end, which does not allow the dispenser to support itself on an ordinary support surface, e.g. a sink counter top.

[0003] US Patent No. 2,731,273 discloses a holder for releasably retaining a tool. The holder includes a cam lock ring and a body, in which the cam lock ring is movable relative to the body in a first direction to lock the tool against disengagement, and in a second direction to unlock the tool so that the tool may be disengaged from the holder.

[0004] However, it is found that after a certain period of use, the dispenser or the tool may get loosed from the base member or tool holder, so that it is necessary to fit the dispenser or tool again into the base member or tool holder.

[0005] It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a retaining mechanism in which the aforesaid shortcoming is mitigated, or at least to provide a useful alternative to the public.

[0006] It should be pointed out that although a liquid dispenser is here shown as being engaged with a retaining mechanism according to the present invention, it should be understood that the present invention can find its application in, e.g. the releasable engagement and locking with any other utensil, e.g. a pair of pliers or a pair of scissors.

Summary of the Invention

[0007] According to the present invention, there is provided a retaining member for releasably retaining an article which retaining member including locking means and a body member wherein said locking means includes a ring member which is movable relative to said body member in a first direction to lock said article against disengagement from said retaining member, wherein said ring member is movable relative to said body member in a second direction to unlock said article whereby said article is disengageable from said retaining member, characterized in that said retaining member further includes engagement means movable radially between an inner position and an outer position, wherein said engagement means is releasably engageable with said article when said engagement means is

in said inner position.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0008] Embodiments of the present invention will be described by way of examples only, and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Fig. 1 shows a side view of a liquid dispenser which may be engaged with and locked by a base portion according to the present invention;

Fig. 2 shows a side view of a first embodiment of a base portion forming part of the present invention;

Fig. 3 shows the liquid dispenser shown in Fig. 1 engaged with the base portion shown in Fig. 2, and attached as a whole to a support surface;

Fig. 4 is a part sectional view of the liquid dispenser and base portion shown in Fig. 3 in which the liquid dispenser is locked with the base member;

Fig. 5A is a sectional view of the base portion taken along the line V-V of Fig. 2 in which the locking pins are in the locking position;

Fig. 5B is a sectional view of the base portion taken along the line V-V of Fig. 2 in which the locking pins are in the unlocked position;

Fig. 6 is a side view of a second embodiment of a base portion, forming part of the present invention;

Fig. 7 is a side view showing the liquid dispenser shown in Fig. 1 engaged with the base portion shown in Fig. 6, and attached as a whole to a support surface;

Fig. 8 is a part sectional view of the liquid dispenser and base portion shown in Fig. 7 in which the dispenser is not locked with the base portion;

Fig. 9 is a part sectional view of the liquid dispenser and base portion shown in Fig. 7 in which the dispenser is locked with the base portion;

Fig. 10 is a side view showing the liquid dispenser shown in Fig. 1 engaged with a third embodiment of a base portion (forming part of the present invention), and attached as a whole to a support surface; and

Fig. 11 is a part sectional view of the liquid dispenser and base portion shown in Fig. 10 in which the liquid dispenser is locked with the base portion.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

[0009] Referring to Fig. 1, a liquid dispenser, e.g. for dispensing liquid soap, constituting an article of the present invention is shown and generally designated as 10. The dispenser 10 includes a body 12 for containing the liquid, with a conventional manually actuated pump and spout assembly 14 threaded to the upper end of the body 12. Formed at and extending from a lower end 16 of the body 12 is a protrusion 18. As can be seen in Fig. 1, the protrusion 18 is generally cylindrical in shape with two groove portions 20, 22 on its outer surface 23. It can be seen that while the surface of the groove portion 20 is substantially planar, the surface of the groove portion 22 is generally concave. At the distal end of the protrusion 18 is a part-spherical portion 24. It can be seen that, with such an arrangement, the dispenser 10 cannot self-support itself on an ordinary support surface, e.g. a desk top or sink counter top.

[0010] Shown in Fig. 2 is a first embodiment of a base portion according to the present invention, and generally designated as 100. The base portion 100 includes a body portion 102 and a ring 104, which is rotatable or swivelable relative to the body portion 102 about a common central longitudinal axis L-L. The outer surface of the ring 104 is corrugated to enhance gripping by a hand of a user for rotation/swiveling. The body portion 102 is open on its upper end 106, through which the protrusion 18 of the dispenser 10 can enter and be received within an internal cavity of the body portion 102. As shown in Fig. 3, the dispenser 10 may thus be engaged with the base portion 100, so that the dispenser 10 can be supported upright on a support surface 108. At the bottom end of the base portion 100 may be provided an adhesive tape, or some other adhesive material, which serves to secure the base portion 100 to the support surface 108.

[0011] Fig. 4 shows in more detail the mode of engagement between the dispenser 10 and the base portion 100. As can be seen, the protrusion 18 of the dispenser 10 is received within an internal cavity of the base portion 100. The part-spherical portion 24 of the protrusion 18 sits on a substantially correspondingly shaped and sized concave trough on the inner bottom end of the base portion 100.

[0012] As shown in Fig. 4, there is a set of upper pin assemblies 110 (of which only one is shown in Fig. 4) and a set of lower pin assemblies 112 (of which, again, only one is shown in Fig. 4). In this particular embodiment, there are three upper pin assemblies 110, and three lower pin assemblies 112. Referring first to the set of lower pin assemblies 112, each such assembly 112 includes a lower pin 114 and a lower spring 116, which biases the respective lower pin 114 radially towards the inner cavity of the base portion 100. Such an arrangement ensures that when the dispenser 10 is engaged with the base portion 100 in the position as shown in Fig. 4, the lower pins 114 are engaged and snap-fitted

with the groove portion 22, so that the dispenser 10 is releasably engaged with the base portion 100. If the dispenser 10 is not locked with the base portion 100 (in a manner to be discussed below), the dispenser 10 may be disengaged from the base portion 100 by being pulled upward and away from the base portion 100. In this way, the lower pin 114 will be pushed radially outward against the biasing force of the lower spring 116, thus allowing the dispenser 10 to be disengaged from the base portion 100.

[0013] As to the upper pin assemblies 110, each such assembly 110 includes an upper pin 118, an upper spring 120, and a head portion 122 integrally formed with the upper pin 118. In a manner to be discussed below, the upper pin 118 may be moved radially inwardly, and against the biasing force of the upper spring 120, to the position as shown in Fig. 4, to engage the groove portion 20. In this inner position, due to the shape of the upper pin 118 and the surface of the groove portion 20, the dispenser 10 is locked, i.e. prevented from being disengaged from the base portion 100, even if the dispenser 10 is pulled upward and away from the base portion 100.

[0014] Fig. 5A shows the upper pins 118 in the inner locking position. In this position, each of the head portion 122 of the pin 118 is acted upon by a cam surface 124 on the inner surface of the ring 104, which cam surface 124 pushes and retains the upper pin 118 in its inner position to engage with the groove portion 20. When the ring 104 is rotated in the direction shown by the arrow B relative to the rest of the base portion 100, the cam surfaces 124 will come out of engagement with the respective head portion 122. As the upper springs 120 bias the respective upper pin 118 radially away from the longitudinal axis L-L of the base portion 100, to its outer position (as shown in Fig. 5B), the upper pins 118 will be disengaged from the groove portion 20 to unlock the dispenser 10, thus allow the dispenser 10 to be disengaged from the base portion 100. The ring 104 may be turned/rotated in the direction shown by the arrow A to again lock the dispenser 10 to the base portion 100. It can be seen that the present invention provides a simple yet effective locking feature which can be used in a large variety of applications.

[0015] Fig. 6 shows a second embodiment of a base portion generally designated as 200. As in the first embodiment of base portion 100 discussed above, this base portion 200 also includes a body portion 202 and a ring 204. The main difference in this base portion 200 is that a shaft 206 extends from its bottom end. The distal end of the shaft 206 is threaded so that it can be threadedly engaged with a nut 208.

[0016] As shown in Fig. 7, the shaft 206 may be received through a bore hole of a support surface 210, and the nut 208 secured against the bottom side of the support surface 210, so as to secure the dispenser 10 and the base portion 200 to the support surface 210. Figs. 8 and 9 show the mode of engagement of the dis-

dispenser 10 with the base portion 200 in, respectively, the unlocked and locked configuration. It can be seen that the mode of engagement and locking are the same as in the first embodiment discussed above.

[0017] Figs. 10 and 11 show a third embodiment of a base portion 300 engaged with the dispenser 10, which base portion 300 including a body portion 308 and a ring 310. The main difference between this base portion 300 and the base portion 200 is that, in this base portion 300, the upper surface 302 and the lower surface 304 are non-parallel, i.e. they are inclined to each other. As shown in these two figures, the dispenser 10 can still assume an upright position although it is secured to a slanted support surface 306. Alternatively, the dispenser 10 may assume an appropriately slanted position when it is secured to a horizontal support surface. It can be seen in Fig. 11 that the mode of engagement and locking are the same as in the first and second embodiments discussed above.

Claims

1. A retaining member (100, 200, 300) for releasably retaining an article (10), which retaining member (100, 200, 300) including locking means and a body member (102, 202, 308), wherein said locking means includes a ring member (104, 204, 310) which is movable relative to said body member (102, 202, 308) in a first direction to lock said article (10) against disengagement from said retaining member (100, 200, 300), wherein said ring member (104, 204, 310) is movable relative to said body member (102, 202, 308) in a second direction to unlock said article (10) whereby said article (10) is disengageable from said retaining member (100, 200, 300), characterized in that said retaining member (100, 200, 300) further includes engagement means (114) movable radially between an inner position and an outer position, wherein said engagement means (114) is releasably engageable with said article (10) when said engagement means (114) is in said inner position.
2. A retaining member according to Claim 1 wherein said first direction is substantially opposite to said second direction.
3. A retaining member according to Claim 1 wherein said retaining member includes a cavity for receiving at least part of said article.
4. A retaining member according to any of the preceding claims wherein said body member is substantially cylindrical.
5. A retaining member according to Claim 1 wherein said body member includes non-parallel upper and lower surfaces (302, 304).
6. A retaining member according to Claim 1 wherein said engagement means is biased towards said inner position.
7. A retaining member according to Claim 1 wherein said engagement means includes a plurality of pin members (114).
8. A retaining member according to Claim 1 wherein said locking means includes at least one locking member (120, 122) movable radially between an inner position and an outer position, wherein when said locking member (120, 122) is in said inner position, it is adapted to prevent disengagement of said article from said retaining member.
9. A retaining member according to Claim 8 wherein said locking member is biased towards said outer position.
10. A retaining member according to Claim 8 wherein said ring member includes actuating means (124) movable to move said locking member between said outer position and said inner position.
11. A retaining member according to Claim 10 wherein said ring member is rotatable in said first direction to move said actuating means to move said locking member from said outer position to said inner position.
12. A retaining member according to Claim 10 wherein said ring member is rotatable in said second position to allow said locking member to move from said inner position to said outer position.
13. A retaining member according to Claim 10 wherein said actuating means includes at least one cam member (124) protruding from an inner surface of said ring member.
14. A retaining member according to Claim 10 wherein said locking member includes at least one pin member (118).
15. A retaining member according to Claim 10 wherein said locking member includes a plurality of pin members.
16. A retaining member according to Claim 15 wherein said actuating means includes a plurality of cam members each adapted to move a respective pin member of said locking member from its outer position to its inner position.
17. A retaining member according to Claim 1 wherein

said retaining member is securable to a support surface (108, 210, 306).

Patentansprüche

1. Haltebauteil (100, 200, 300) zum lösbaren Halten eines Gegenstands (10), welches Haltebauteil (100, 200, 300) ein Verriegelungsmittel und ein Rumpfbauteil (102, 202, 308) einschließt, wobei das Verriegelungsmittel ein Ringbauteil (104, 204, 310) einschließt, welches relativ zu dem Rumpfbauteil (102, 202, 308) in einer ersten Richtung bewegbar ist, um den Gegenstand (10) gegen ein Entkoppeln aus dem Haltebauteil (100, 200, 300) zu verriegeln, wobei das Ringbauteil (104, 204, 310) relativ zu dem Rumpfbauteil (102, 202, 308) in einer zweiten Richtung bewegbar ist, um den Gegenstand (10) zu entriegeln, wonach der Gegenstand (10) aus dem Haltebauteil (100, 200, 300) entkoppelbar ist, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Haltebauteil (100, 200, 300) ferner ein Kopplungsmittel (114) einschließt, welche radial zwischen einer inneren Position und einer äußeren Position bewegbar ist, wobei das Kopplungsmittel (114) lösbar koppelbar ist mit dem Gegenstand (10), wenn das Kopplungsmittel (114) in der inneren Position ist.
2. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** die erste Richtung im wesentlichen entgegengesetzt zu der zweiten Richtung ist.
3. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Haltebauteil eine Aushöhlung zur Aufnahme wenigstens eines Teils des Gegenstands einschließt.
4. Haltebauteil nach einem der vorangehenden Ansprüche, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Rumpfbauteil im wesentlichen zylindrisch ist.
5. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Rumpfbauteil nicht parallele Ober- und Unterflächen (302, 304) einschließt.
6. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Kopplungsmittel auf die innere Position ausgerichtet ist.
7. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Kopplungsmittel eine Vielzahl von Stiftbauteilen (114) einschließt.
8. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Verriegelungsmittel wenigstens ein Verriegelungsbauteil (120, 122) einschließt, welches radial zwischen einer inneren Position und einer äußeren Position bewegbar ist, wobei es,

wenn das Verriegelungsbauteil (120, 122) in der inneren Position ist, angepaßt ist, um eine Entkopplung des Gegenstands aus dem Haltebauteil zu verhindern.

9. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 8, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Verriegelungsbauteil auf die äußere Position ausgerichtet ist.
10. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 8, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Ringbauteil ein Betätigungsmittel (124) einschließt, welches bewegbar ist, um das Verriegelungsbauteil zwischen der äußeren Position und der inneren Position zu bewegen.
11. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 10, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Ringbauteil in die erste Richtung drehbar ist, um das Betätigungsmittel zu bewegen, um das Verriegelungsbauteil aus der äußeren Position zu der inneren Position zu bewegen.
12. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 10, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Ringbauteil in die zweite Position drehbar ist, um es dem Verriegelungsbauteil zu ermöglichen, sich von der inneren Position zu der äußeren Position zu bewegen.
13. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 10, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Betätigungsmittel wenigstens ein Ansatzbauteil (124) einschließt, welches von einer inneren Oberfläche des Ringbauteils hervorspringt.
14. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 10, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Verriegelungsbauteil wenigstens ein Stiftbauteil (118) einschließt.
15. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 10, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Verriegelungsbauteil eine Vielzahl von Stiftbauteilen einschließt.
16. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 15, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Betätigungsmittel eine Vielzahl von Ansatzbauteilen einschließt, jeweils angepaßt, um ein entsprechendes Stiftbauteil des Verriegelungsbauteils von seiner äußeren Position zu seiner inneren Position zu bewegen.
17. Haltebauteil nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Haltebauteil an eine Trägerfläche (108, 210, 306) befestigbar ist.

Revendications

1. Élément de retenue (100, 200, 300) pour fixer de manière libérable un article (10), lequel élément de retenue (100, 200, 300) comprend un moyen de

- verrouillage et un corps (102, 202, 308), dans lequel ledit moyen de verrouillage comprend une bague (104, 204, 310) qui peut être déplacée par rapport audit corps (102, 202, 308) dans une première direction pour verrouiller ledit article (10) pour l'empêcher de se dégager dudit élément de retenue (100, 200, 300), dans lequel ladite bague (104, 204, 310) peut être déplacée par rapport audit corps (102, 202, 308) dans une deuxième direction pour déverrouiller ledit article (10), ledit article (10) pouvant être dégagé dudit élément de retenue (100, 200, 300), **caractérisé en ce que** ledit élément de retenue (100, 200, 300) comprend en outre un moyen d'enclenchement (114) qui peut être déplacé radialement entre une position intérieure et une position extérieure, et **en ce que** ledit moyen d'enclenchement (114) peut être enclenché de manière libérable dans ledit article (10) lorsque ledit moyen d'enclenchement (114) se trouve dans ladite position intérieure.
2. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite première position est sensiblement opposée à ladite deuxième direction.
 3. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ledit moyen de retenue comprend une cavité pour recevoir au moins partiellement ledit article.
 4. Élément de retenue selon une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel ledit corps est sensiblement cylindrique.
 5. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ledit corps comprend des surfaces supérieure et inférieure (302, 304) non parallèles.
 6. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ledit moyen d'enclenchement est sollicité en direction de ladite position intérieure.
 7. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ledit moyen d'enclenchement comprend plusieurs doigts (114).
 8. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ledit moyen d'enclenchement comprend au moins un élément de verrouillage (120, 122) qui peut être déplacé radialement entre une position intérieure et une position extérieure, dans lequel lorsque ledit élément de verrouillage (120, 122) se trouve dans ladite position intérieure, celui-ci est adapté pour empêcher le dégagement dudit article dudit élément de retenue.
 9. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 8, dans lequel ledit élément de verrouillage est sollicité en direction de ladite position extérieure.
 10. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 8, dans lequel ladite bague comprend des moyens d'actionnement (124) qui peuvent être déplacés aux fins de déplacer ledit élément de verrouillage entre ladite position extérieure et ladite position intérieure.
 11. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 10, dans lequel ladite bague peut tourner dans ladite première direction pour déplacer ledit moyen d'actionnement aux fins de déplacer ledit élément de verrouillage de ladite position intérieure vers ladite position extérieure.
 12. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 10, dans lequel ladite bague peut être tournée dans ladite deuxième direction pour permettre audit élément de verrouillage de se déplacer de ladite position intérieure vers ladite position extérieure.
 13. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 10, dans lequel ledit moyen d'actionnement comprend au moins un élément formant came (124), qui fait saillie sur une surface intérieure de ladite bague.
 14. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 10, dans lequel ledit élément de verrouillage comprend au moins un doigt (118).
 15. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 10, dans lequel ledit élément de verrouillage comprend plusieurs doigts.
 16. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 15, dans lequel ledit moyen d'actionnement comprend plusieurs cames prévues chacune pour déplacer un doigt associé dudit moyen de verrouillage, de sa position extérieure vers sa position intérieure.
 17. Élément de retenue selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ledit moyen de retenue peut être fixé à une surface support (108, 210, 306).

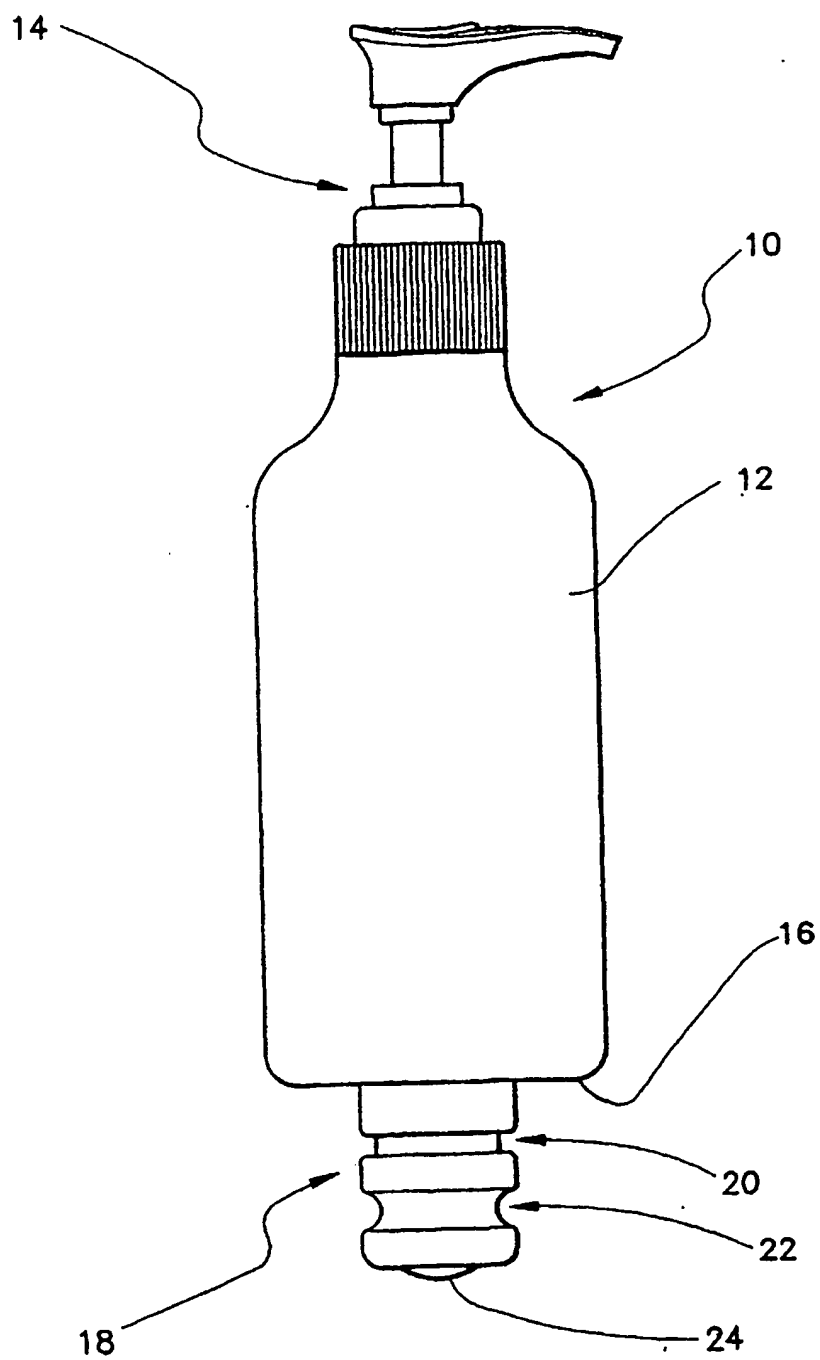


FIG. 1

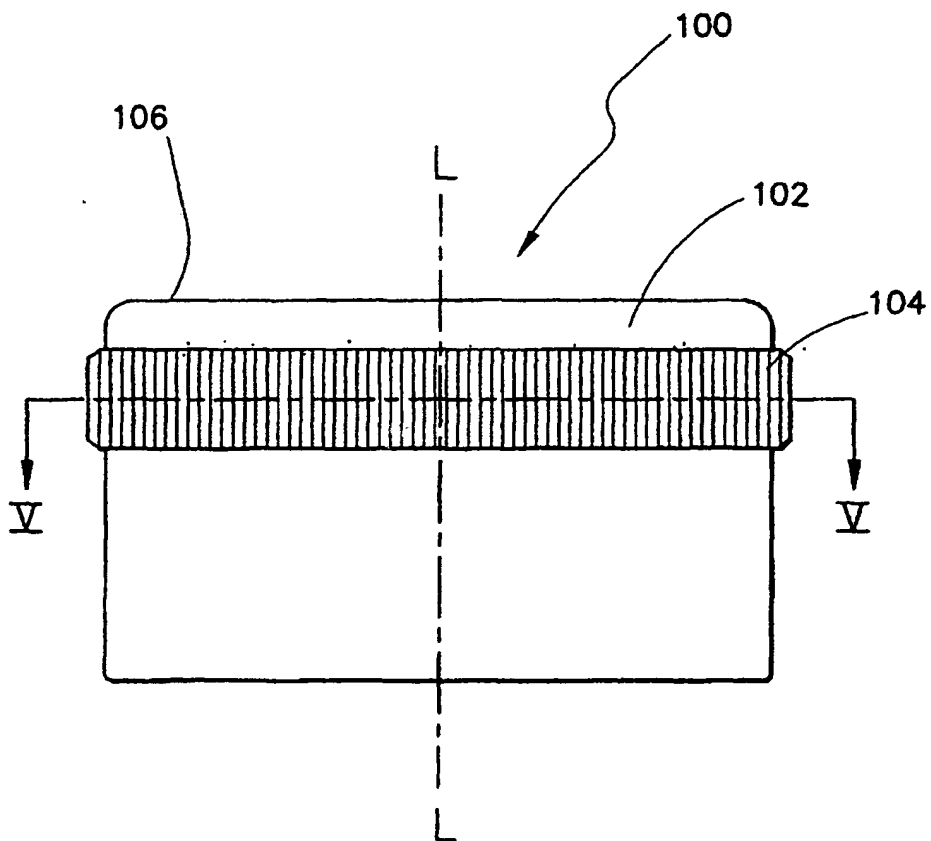
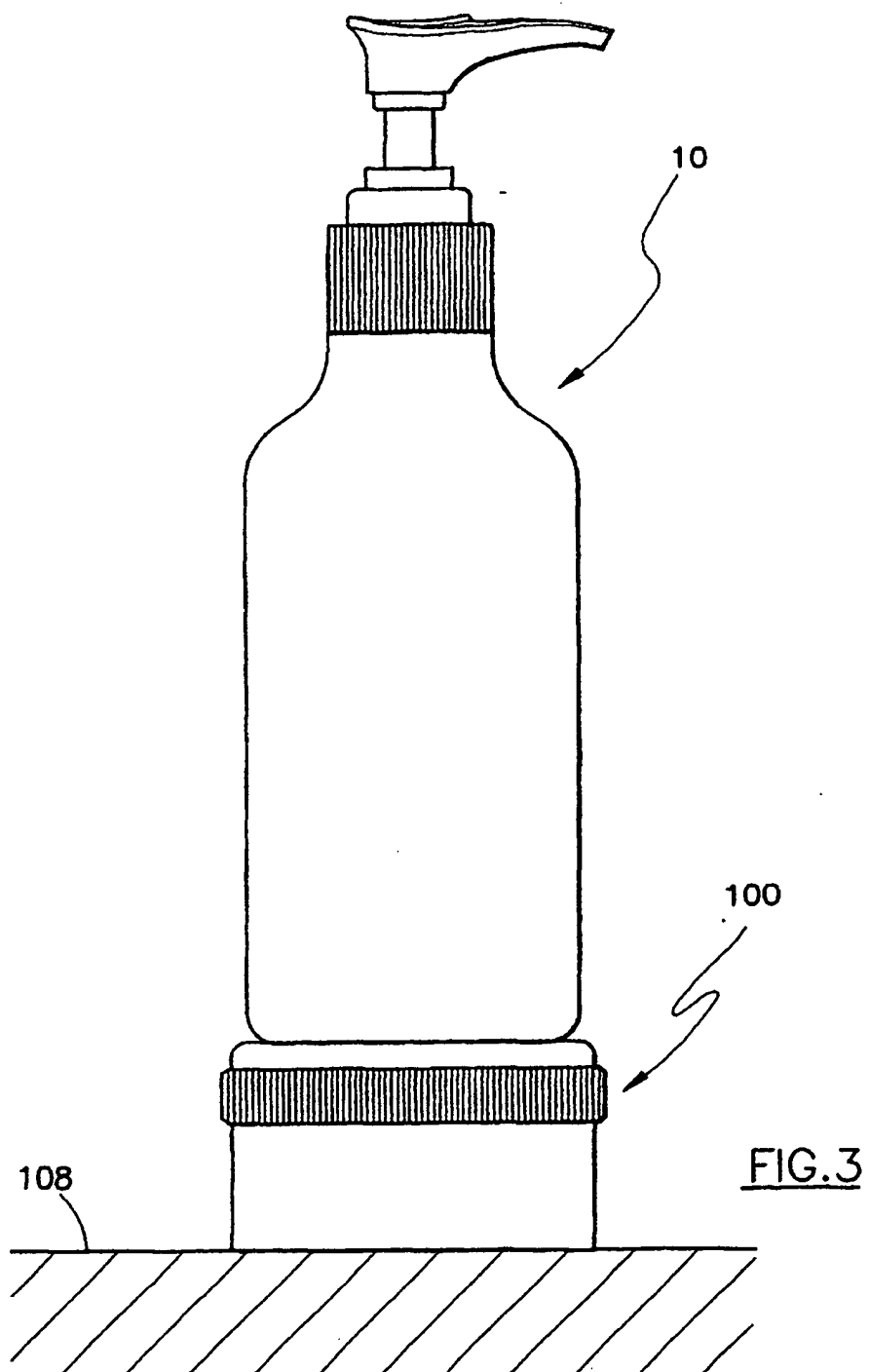
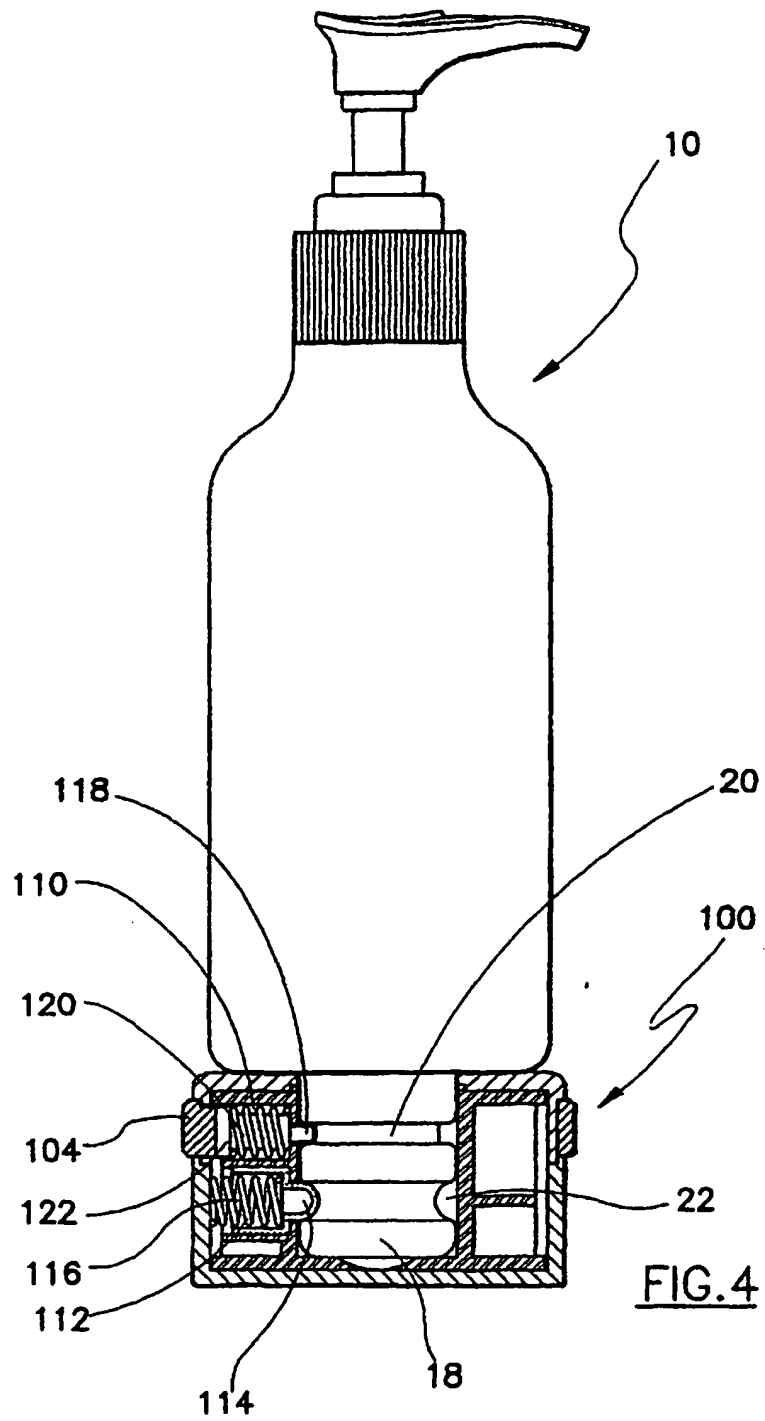
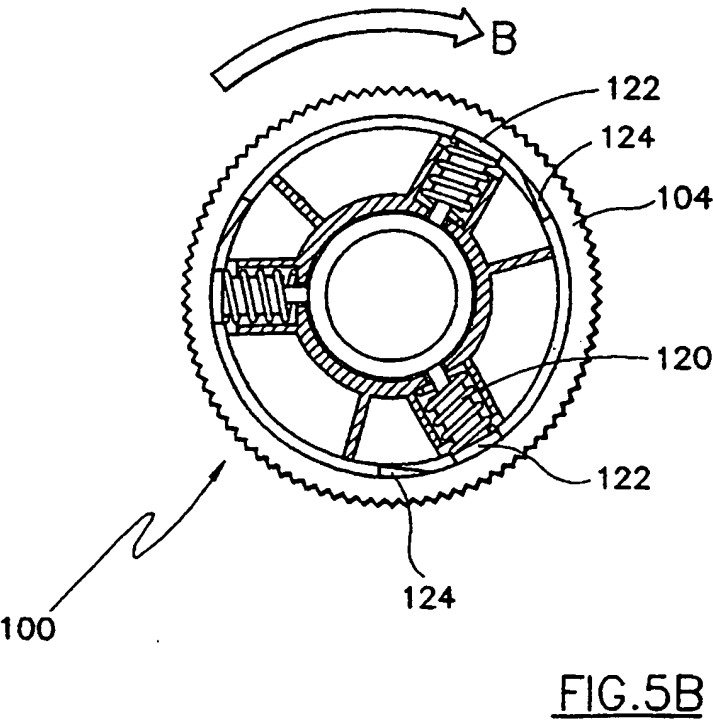
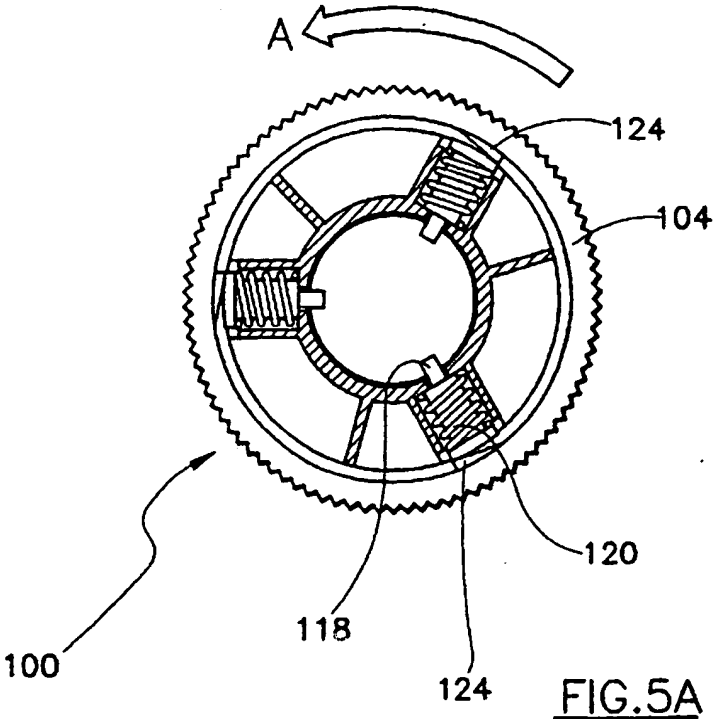


FIG.2







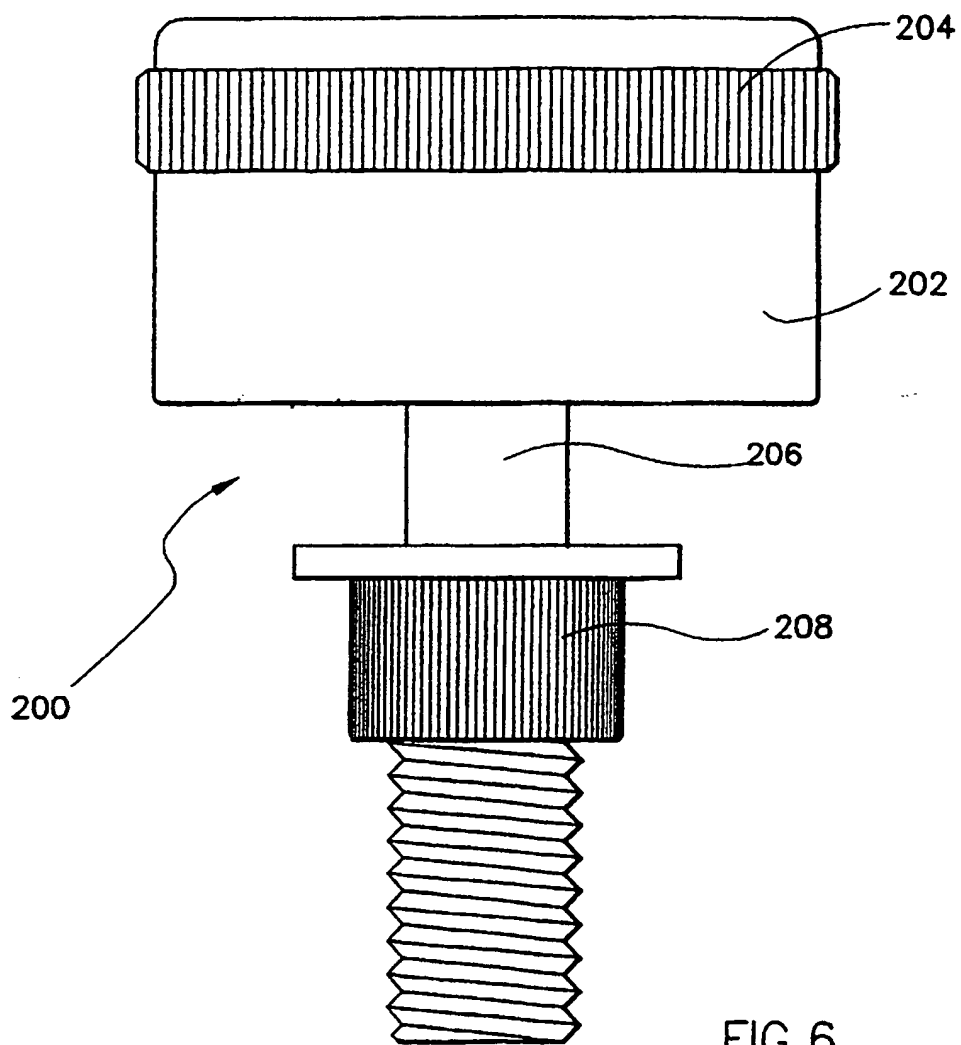


FIG. 6

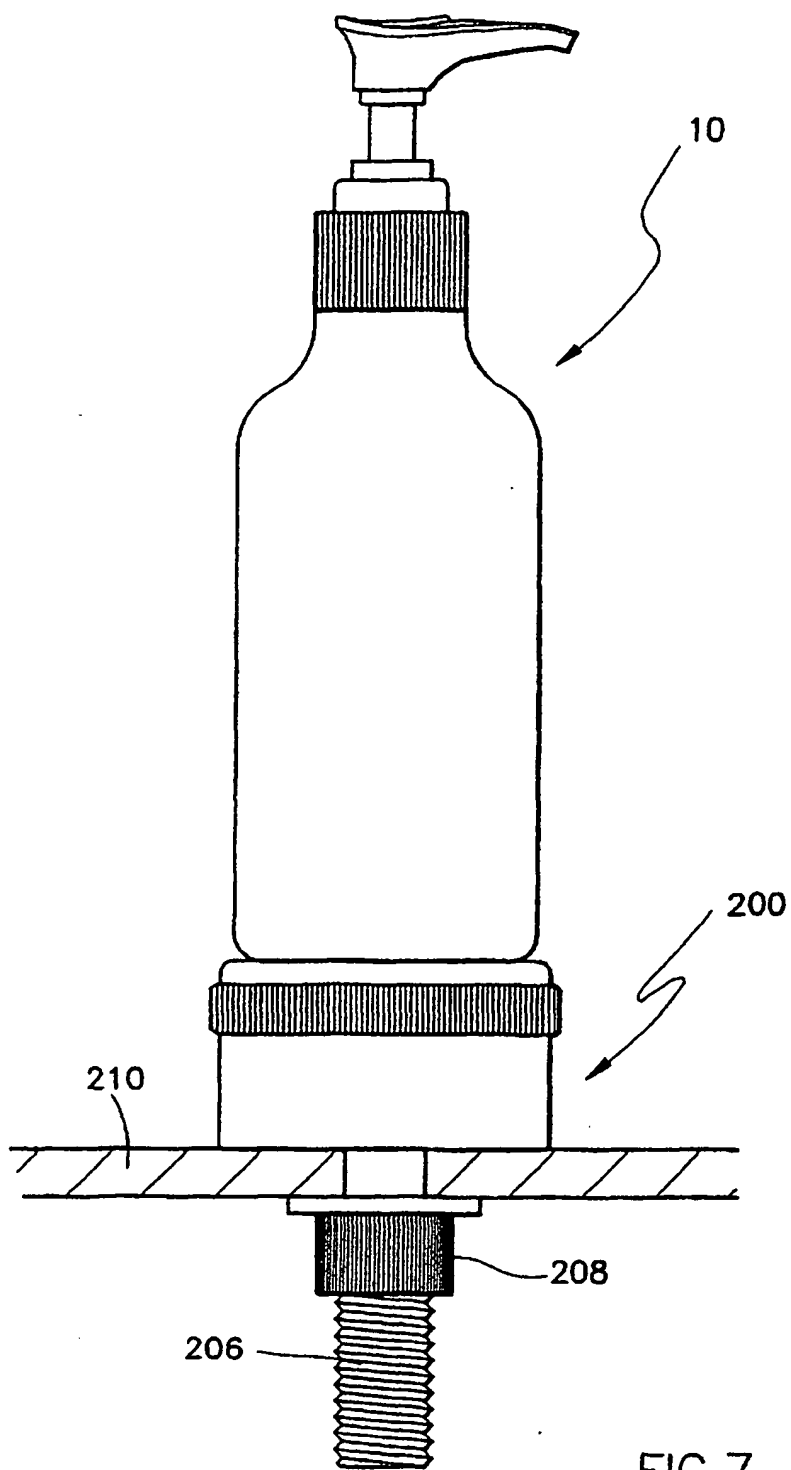


FIG. 7

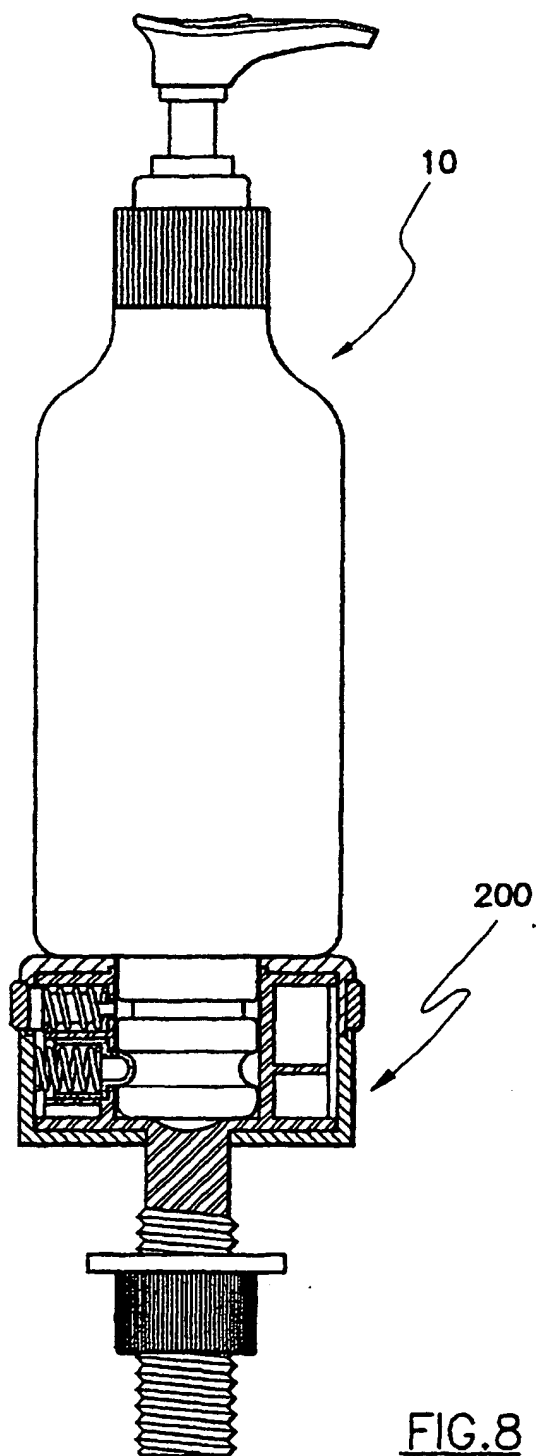
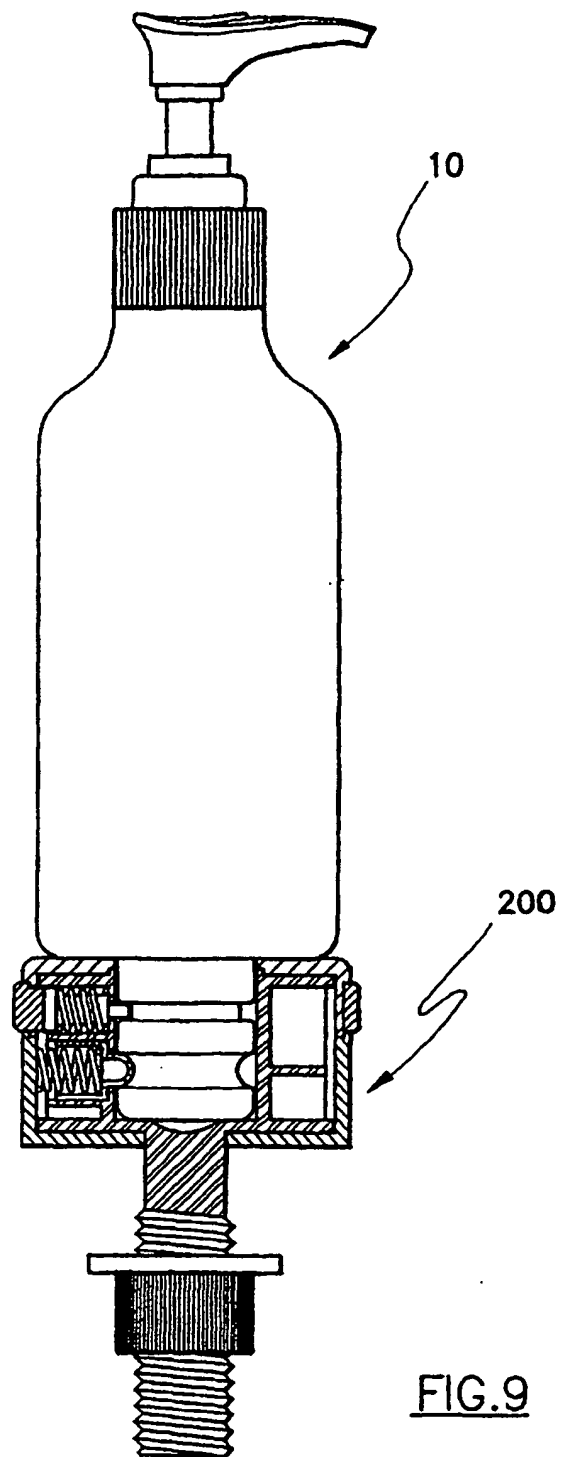


FIG. 8



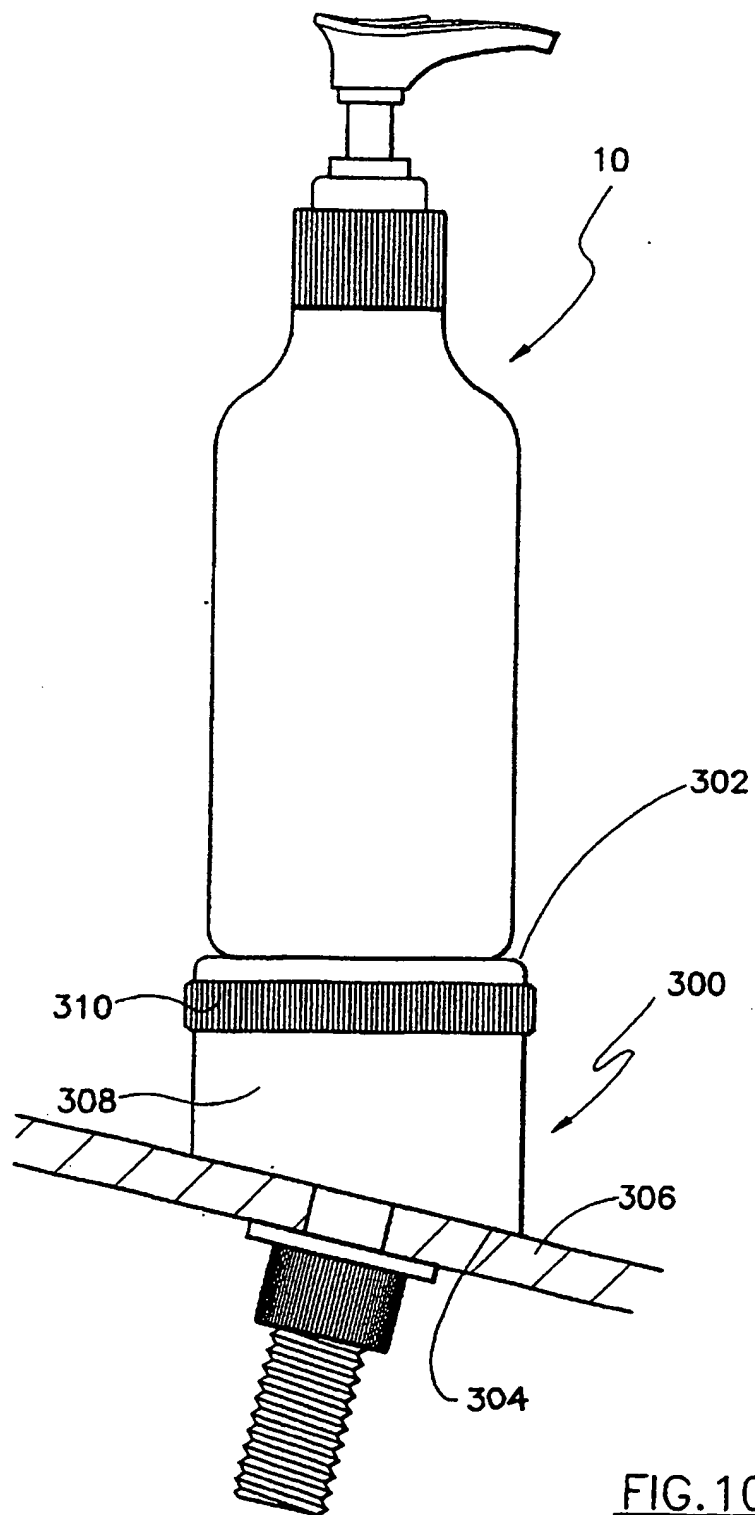


FIG. 10

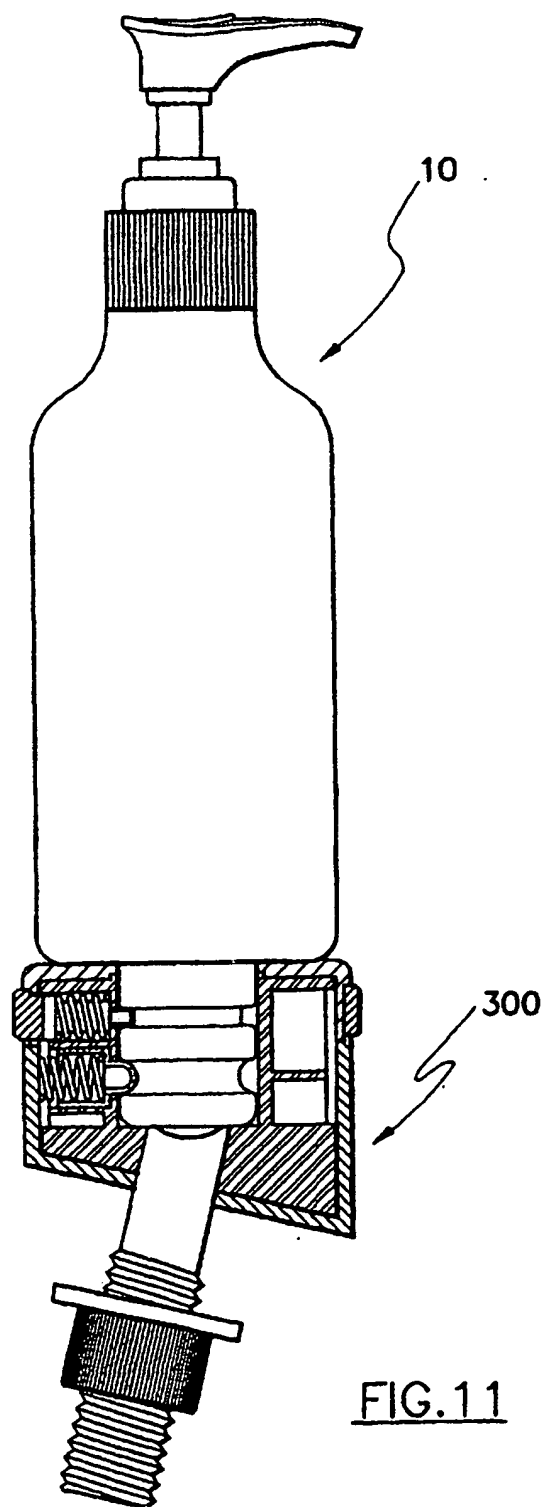


FIG. 11